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EXCLUSIVE

'I KNEW THE REAL KILLER OF PRESIDENT

KENNEDY'

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State Claims 2 Esperti Witnesses

By MILT SOSIN
Miami News Reporter

Assistant State Attorney Alfonso Sepe told the jury at the first degree murder trial of Anthony (Tough Tony) Esperti that the state will put on two witnesses who will identify Esperti as the slayer of Tommy Altamura, Miami Mafia figure.

The defense, represented for the opening statement by William Moran, a former associate of Sepe's on the state attorney's staff, said that it would satisfy the jurors that it was a case of mistaken identity.

Moran said that the defense will admit that Esperti was in the Harbor Lounge on the 79th street Causeway, North Bay Village, on the early morning of last Oct. 31, when Altamura was gunned to death but that it was not Esperti who pulled the trigger.

The opening statements were the first words in the courtroom heard by the 12-man jury since it was sworn at the opening of the morning session.

Almost the entire forenoon session was taken up by testimony out of the presence of the jury concerning a missing witness.

Sepe, without alluding to the missing witness, told the jurors that the state would put on two visitors to Florida who were in the lounge at the time of the shooting.

He identified them as Charles Dore, from New Jersey, and Forrest Schaeffer Jr., of Valley Forge, Pa. Although Sepe did not further identify him in the courtroom, out of the court members of the state attorney's staff said that Schaeffer was a nephew of the governor of Pennsylvania and a member of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission.

"Mr. Schaeffer will tell you that at a line-up that the Metro Public Safety Department a few hours after the shooting he picked a deputy sheriff out of the lineup as the man who fired the gun," Sepe said, obviously bent on taking away defense ammunition concerning the killing.

Sepe continued:

"But he will also tell you that he did so purposely and that afterwards he returned to the Sheriff's Department and picked out Esperti's picture as the assailant."

First witnesses included Irwin Gars, an attorney for Altamura who identified the body; Dr. Brian Blackbourne, an assistant medical examiner who performed the autopsy; Sgt. Thomas E. Fox, of the Metro Crime Lab who made photographs and drew a large sketch of the bar and the adjoining Place For Steak Restaurant, and Herbert Login, one of the owners of the establishment. (Earlier story 3-A.)